

Historic District Review Committee

Staff Report
March 8, 2010

Action Item

CAPP 2010-0004 Knipmeyer: Construction of a Utility Screening and Storage Lean-To in the Waterford Historic District: MCPI 303-36-1627.

Background

The applicant proposes to construct a utility screen for propane tanks and a storage lean-to on the north side of the residence on the subject property, 40108 Bond Street, in the Waterford Historic and Cultural Conservation District (Figure 1). Known as Hillside, this early vernacular frame house is a two-story, symmetrical, three-bay building with a one-story wing. It is clapboard clad with a stone foundation and a standing seam metal roof. The residence may have been constructed as early as the mid-eighteenth century. In the early 1800s, the residence served as Waterford's first post office. It is a contributing resource to the Waterford National Historic Landmark.

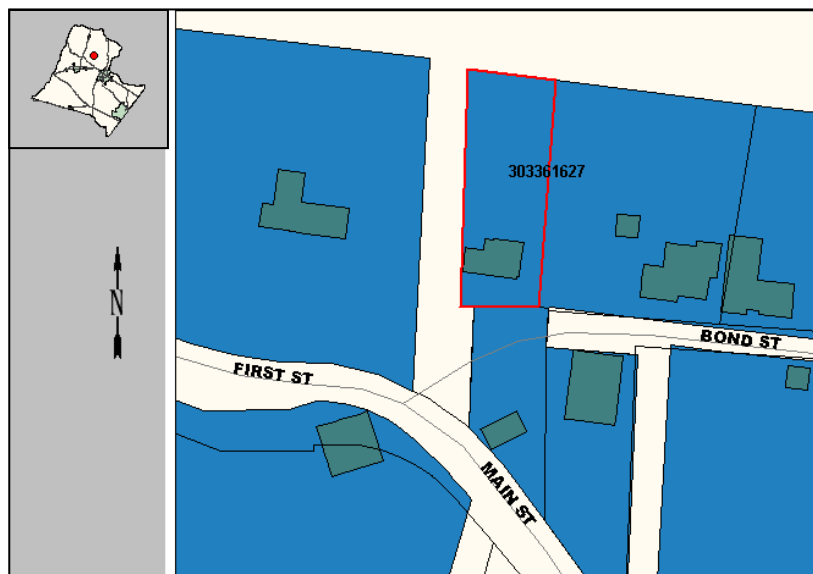


Figure 1: Subject property, 40108 Bond Street in Waterford.

According to the Zoning Administration Referral letter dated March 2, 2010, the proposed improvements will affect moderately steep slopes and the applicant will be required to obtain locational clearance prior the issuance of a zoning permit in accordance with the Revised 1993 Loudoun County Zoning Ordinance.

Analysis

The Guidelines for Site Elements (Chapter 3) and Guidelines for Additions (Chapter 5), in the Loudoun County Historic District Guidelines: Waterford (Waterford Guidelines) will be used to evaluate this application.

Proposed Utility Screen and Storage Lean-To

The applicant proposes to build a storage lean-to and an adjacent utility screen for four propane gas tanks on the north (side) elevation of the historic residence. Both elements will be constructed on a slab on grade with materials consistent with the existing dwelling. The entire footprint will be 3' 2" deep, just over 13' long, and no more than approximately 7' tall.

Utilities' Screening

The Guidelines for Mechanical and Utilities' Screening state that site appurtenances should be placed in inconspicuous areas. When possible, this should be at the rear of the building or below grade. A photo caption showing appropriate screening also notes, "Mechanical units are often located along the side of the house facing the driveway." The location should be screened with appropriate plantings or fencing (Waterford Guidelines, Guidelines for Site Elements: Mechanical and Utilities' Screening, Guidelines 1 and 2, and photo caption, p. 47).

The Guidelines for Additions state that additions should be attached to the side or rear elevation and in a manner that can be removed later without damaging the historic building. The exact wall plane or roof height of the building should not be used and the size, massing, and siting should be subordinate to the historic building. Additionally, the design and materials should be compatible with the existing house (Waterford Guidelines, Guidelines for Additions: Location, Orientation, and Attachment, Guidelines 1 and 3; Design, Guidelines 2-4, p. 80; Roof, Guideline 3; Materials and Details, Guidelines 1 and 2, p. 82).

The proposed screening for new propane tanks will conceal them from public view. The propane tanks will be located on the side of the house and next to the driveway. This location is proximal to the chimney to be used for a new gas burning fireplace insert. Since the house is on the hillside above Bond Street, a side location is inconspicuous to the passerby. Existing evergreens will also screen the structure from the public view. Furthermore, as noted in a photo caption in the Guidelines, the side of a house is a typical location for utilities' screening.

The proposed propane tank screening will be just over 8' long and 6' high. It will be a simple rectangular frame clad with painted wood clapboards with a reveal and color matching the residence clapboards. The screening will have an open top. The walls will be finished with metal flashing. Paired, painted, wood, folding doors with lattice panels will provide access to the tanks.

Lean-To Shed

The proposed lean-to shed will be in a 5' long section attached to the tank screening and toward the front of the house. It will be recessed 2' 3 1/2" from the front of the house, differentiating it from the facade wall plane. This section will have a shed roof with a 3/12 pitch. This pitch matches the pitch of an existing woodshed located in the front yard. It will also soften the appearance of the projection from the side of the house. The proposed storage lean-to and propane tank screen will be attached to the house in a manner that can be removed in the future and without damaging the historic building, meeting the Guidelines for Additions.

The proposed lean-to shed will be clad with wood siding continuous with the screen section. The roof will be covered with standing seam metal, matching the historic house and ubiquitous in the Waterford Historic District. A double door will be located in the lean-to. It will be painted wood with a slat panel design. Finishing the entire structure will be 5/4" by 4" painted wood corner boards similar to the main building. Wood is the preferred material for siding, trim, and doors and is in keeping with the materials on the historic house.

The materials, location, design, and method of attachment proposed for the propane tank screen and lean-to shed meet the Guidelines.

Findings

- 1. The location of the proposed propane tank screen and lean-to shed is typical, inconspicuous, and screened from the public view by evergreens.*
- 2. The proposed materials are in keeping with the associated historic house and the Waterford Historic District.*
- 3. The simple design of the proposed tank screen and lean-to shed is appropriate to the vernacular character of the historic house.*
- 4. The proposed tank screen and lean-to shed will be attached in a manner that will not damage the historic building and can be removed in the future.*

Recommendation

Staff recommends approval of the application as proposed.

Suggested Motions

- 1. I move that the Historic District Review Committee approve Certificate of Appropriateness 2010-0004 for construction of a utility screen and lean-to shed on the north elevation of 40108 Bond Street in accordance with the Loudoun County Historic District Guidelines for the Waterford Historic and Cultural Conservation District based on the findings included on page 3 of the staff report dated March 8, 2010....*

2. *I move that the Historic District Review Committee approve Certificate of Appropriateness 2010-0004 for construction of a utility screen and lean-to shed on the north elevation of 40108 Bond Street in accordance with the Loudoun County Historic District Guidelines for the Waterford Historic and Cultural Conservation District based on the findings included on page 3 of the staff report dated March 8, 2010...and the following conditions....*
3. *I move alternate motion...*